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March 10, 2016

## Statement of the Connecticut Food Association - LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Wayne Pesce, President, Connecticut Food Association

### In opposition of raised bill 221: AN ACT CONCERNING PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Connecticut Food Association (CFA) proudly advocates on behalf of the food retail industry. Its mission is to cultivate Connecticut's grocery industry through economic development, nutrition & wellness, environmental stewardship and community service. CFA membership covers the spectrum of diverse venues where food is sold, including single owner grocery stores, large supermarket chains, food distributors, food manufacturers, and specialty food purveyors.

On behalf of Connecticut's grocery retailers, I urge you to oppose SB 221 - To implement a system of paid family and medical leave in the state. Our reasons for opposition to this bill are that it:

- ☐ Will likely necessitate the hiring of potentially hundreds of new state employees to administer the program. (Federal restriction prohibit current DOL employees from administering it)
- ☐ Requires small businesses to continue to provide expensive non-wage benefits to an employee that is absent up to 3 months every year.
- ☐ Is unnecessary one-size-fits-all program. In a recent survey, 54% of CT businesses had made changes in order to add more flexibility to their leave policies in the last 5 years.
- ☐ Has an unknown cost, although an identical program in Washington State was abandoned after it was projected to cost \$235 million per biennium.

Improving Connecticut's comprehensive business climate to be more cost-effective and simple is our ultimate goal. CFA's members are committed to economic development, growth opportunities for our associates and being responsible business enterprises in the state. We support our states long term economic goals and are committed to doing our part to make Connecticut a better place to work, live and raise our families.